

much higher percentage on the important organics such as tomatoes, berries, greens, and some other staples that are most chemical-laden in the conventional counterpart. And I am happy to do so to help a growing sector of sustainable farmers. I always felt that, in the long run, this would come back to benefit all as our country turned to more sustainable and nutritious agriculture.

After studying some of the recent documentaries about our food supply, and the big corporate welfare, and how the farm bill works, I realized that, for some reason, our system prefers us eating the 2,000 mile irradiated, grown for shelf life, nutrient void produce. Organic and sustainable farming hasn't really been given the chance in the past, but I do have hope that because of rising fuel costs that maybe our officials will wake up and support locally grown and sold agriculture (at the expense of big agri and big oil). It will be cheaper with less transportation costs, but to get off the ground we need some government intervention that gives incentives for farmers to take the risk. We subsidize all the corn out there to make us obese with its crack of sweeteners and processed puffed foods and to feed more farm animals than we really have business eating, (\$79 hamburgers??); why do we not give nutrition a fair shake. Why do we not try to learn some of Europe's successes and shape a healthy community-based food system? So what I can do is look at my plate as half full on this issue; that is how high fuel costs can benefit me most.

Thank you,

RYAN.

The high energy prices are affecting our family negatively. Higher grocery prices. Gas prices were 1.46 when Bush took office. Unfortunately, Senator Crapo's vote to support the war in Iraq is one reason that gas prices are so high.

BRIAN.

I live in Jerome, Idaho, a rural community. We live between Twin Falls and Jerome, my wife works in Twin Falls and I work in Jerome. Since our area is rural and there is not any form of mass transit like in larger cities the high gas prices are killing us. My wife works for Twin Falls school district and they got a 2 percent raise this year and I got a 3 percent raise. The gas prices have taken all of our raises plus much more. We do not take any long drives other than to work. Life has changed in a big way and not to the positive side. The following is an email I received and I did check it out on the internet. Why are we not tapping into this oil field?

1. Ever heard of the Bakken Formation? Google it. I did, and again, blew my mind. The U.S. Geological Service issued a report in April ('08) that only scientists and oilmen/women knew was coming, but man was it big. It was a revised report (hadn't been updated since '95) on how much oil was in this area of the western 2/3 of North Dakota; western South Dakota; and extreme eastern Montana . . . check this out:

"The Bakken is the largest domestic oil discovery since Alaska's Prudhoe Bay, and has the potential to eliminate all American dependence on foreign oil. The Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates it at 503 billion barrels. Even if just 10% of the oil is recoverable . . . at \$107 a barrel, we're looking at a resource base worth more than \$5.3 trillion.

"When I first briefed legislators on this, you could practically see their jaws hit the floor. They had no idea," says Terry Johnson, the Montana Legislature's financial analyst.

"This sizable find is now the highest-producing onshore oil field found in the past 56

years," reports The Pittsburgh Post Gazette. It is a formation known as the Williston Basin, but is more commonly referred to as the 'Bakken.' And it stretches from Northern Montana, through North Dakota and into Canada. For years, U.S. oil exploration has been considered a dead end. Even the 'Big Oil' companies gave up searching for major oil wells decades ago. However, a recent technological breakthrough has opened up the Bakken's massive reserves . . . and we now have access of up to 500 billion barrels. And because this is light, sweet oil, those billions of barrels will cost Americans just \$16 per barrel!

"That is enough crude to fully fuel the American economy for 41 years straight."

2. [And if that didn't throw you on the floor, then this next one should—because it is from two years ago, people!]

"U.S. Oil Discovery—Largest Reserve in the World! Stansberry Report Online—4/20/2006 Hidden 1,000 feet beneath the surface of the Rocky Mountains lies the largest untapped oil reserve in the world is more than 2 trillion barrels. On August 8, 2005 President Bush mandated its extraction.

"They reported this stunning news: We have more oil inside our borders, than all the other proven reserves on earth. Here are the official estimates: 8 times as much oil as Saudi Arabia; 18 times as much oil as Iraq; 21 times as much oil as Kuwait; 22 times as much oil as Iran; 500 times as much oil as Yemen—and it is all right here in the Western United States."

[How can this be!? How can we not be extracting this!? Because we've not demanded legislation to come out of Washington allowing its extraction; that is why!]

"James Bartis, lead researcher with the study says we've got more oil in this very compact area than the entire Middle East—more than 2 trillion barrels. Untapped. That is more than all the proven oil reserves of crude oil in the world today, reports The Denver Post.

"Do not think 'Big Oil' will drop its price—even with this find? Think again! It is all about the competitive marketplace, and if they can extract it (here) for less, they can afford to sell it for less—and if they do not, others will. It will come down—it has to." [Got your attention/ire up yet? Hope so! Now, while you're thinking about it . . . and hopefully P.O'd, do this:

PAT.

SENATOR CRAPO, New drilling of oil reserves will not even reduce the price of gas. All drilling more wells will do is put more money into the hands of the big oil companies. Nuclear costs far too much when accounting for the storage of the waste it generates. It is time for a new approach!

We need incentives for mass transit and electric vehicles. Idaho, in particular has an abundance of renewable energy potential, just waiting to be exploited. Solar and wind development needs to be a priority. It is time to fill our gas tanks from the sun!

Why not take this opportunity to address carbon dioxide generation from vehicles and gas prices at the same time?

My family has been affected by high energy prices just like everyone else, but the solution is not poking our heads in the sand.

Sincerely,

CHRIS, Boise.

1. Get all your fellow Senators to emphasize conservation and to practice what they preach. The 'historic' comment by Vice President Dick Cheney that conservation is a 'personal virtue' came across as an inference that conservation is a wimpy attitude and real cowboys do not do that.

2. Show me that the federal bureaucracy really can reduce the waste of our energy

and natural resources. Start with your office and your staff. Hypocrisy is so yesterday!

3. Quit the whining that we must drill in the ANWR. The so-called Naval Reserves established in the 1920s are now being "developed" for oil and gas exploitation; an area the size of the State of Indiana.

4. Show us that oil and gas drilling can be done properly. The massive operations in Wyoming are creating a gawd-awful mess.

5. Encourage our nation's truck carriers to pay their drivers by the hour and not by the mile. Then, the drivers will have a decent incentive to drive at the speed limit and conserve fuel.

6. Then, if you dare, encourage the USPS to eliminate Saturday deliveries, and keep those 200,000 residential-delivery jitneys off the road. (Besides, all they do is save up the junk mail for Saturday delivery. When is the last time you received anything important via US mail on a Saturday?)

Thanks for listening,

D.

SENATOR CRAPO, Rather than solicit stories for the purpose of political grandstanding, how about you take a moment to understand the real reason why energy prices are where they are.

High energy (and food) costs can be laid squarely at the feet of the U.S. Congress and President, including you. This is because of what has been done to the U.S. dollar during the Bush/Republican years. Deficit spending and a disastrous war in Iraq have frittered away a budget surplus and progress toward reducing our national debt. Rather than act as the party of fiscal responsibility, the Republican Party has frittered our national financial health away.

Over the last few years, it was plainly obvious what was being done to the dollar from a spendthrift Congress and markets acted accordingly. And, if you believe that your currency is going to become worthless, the only way to preserve your net worth is to own tangible things, particularly commodities. This is what has spurred this massive commodity boom—lack of faith in the dollar. I have been invested in a basket of commodities for over four years now, one of the best investments I have ever made. My decision was based heavily on the irresponsible Congress.

If you have any doubts about this relationship, look no further than those bad unemployment numbers from June 6th. Intuitively, you'd think that lots of unemployed people would cause oil prices to drop on weaker demand. Yet oil had its biggest one day rise in history, starting the minute those unemployment numbers came out. Why? Because bad unemployment numbers puts pressure on the Federal Reserve to hold rates steady or lower them at a time when the Fed wants to raise them before inflation gets any further out of control. This is bad for the dollar; the dollar dropped as well that day.

Let me give you a quick example of the effect the weak dollar has had on gas prices. Let's say the dollar magically went back to par with the Euro, where it used to be not so very long ago. Gasoline would be around \$2.70 per gallon! A strong dollar would also pop this balloon of commodity speculation we are seeing and drive down prices even further.

So if you truly want to fix high gasoline prices, it is time to face up to the giant elephant in the room that is the irresponsible fiscal policy of the U.S. Congress and stop this huffing and puffing about drilling on the continental shelf and ANWR. Even a hint of real fiscal responsibility would go a long way toward strengthening the dollar. We cannot drill our way out of this problem, as much as